

# THE IGNITION PLAN

Fire Up your Startup!



Greetings!

Welcome to the June issue of the Ignition Plan. This is our 4th issue and I wanted to take a moment to thank everyone for their support, feedback and participation in the community. Based on your responses, I have implemented a few changes to the Plan: we are moving to a monthly publication in order to be more efficient and impactful to our subscribers. Going forward, you will be receiving a consolidated newsletter that will include both the “Lessons Learned” and “Ask Craig Anything” features. Be sure to submit your question to me via the submission box below.

In addition, the “Founders’ Forum” meetup will be taking a hiatus for the summer and will return this fall with a more targeted and focused format. Additional detail will be provided later in the summer. I appreciate your continued support and please feel free to reach out to me with ideas, suggestions and asks.

Craig

## LESSONS LEARNED:

### Enter the “soak zone” and I don’t mean at a water park!

Summer is finally here, and I hope you are taking time to enjoy the warm weather. I’m sure we all remember the joys of going to a water park and spending a hot summer day zipping down water slides and cooling off in a wave pool. There’s nothing like entering the “soak zone” to escape the heat and the pressures of the world. **The concept of cooling off in the soak zone can also be applied to your startup (believe it or not).**

Our days as entrepreneurs are filled with emails, phone calls, meetings and many other forms of communication, all requiring decisions and responses that can significantly impact the business. We get into a groove where we are making decisions, firing off rapid responses and moving down the “to do” list to the next item. I know this is the reality of being an entrepreneur (too much to do, too little time to do it) but, trust me on this, **it can be beneficial to slow down and reflect on your decisions and responses to important matters.** I call this, “taking some soak time” which basically means to formulate your plan (perhaps even write the email or outline talking points for the call) but to hold off on hitting send to take time to think about the issue and weigh your response before you act.

I employ this strategy frequently and you would be surprised to learn how many times I adjust (or completely change) my original strategy/response. Give it a try. For particularly important or potentially controversial issues, work through your strategy and response but don’t hit “send” right away. **Take a little “soak time” to allow your subconscious time to think** about the issue and to ensure your initial reaction is the best path forward. It’s worth the extra effort!





I know that I should spend time on outreach to expand my network and grow my business but I'm so busy on the day to day. How can I best use my time to get the maximum impact from my outreach efforts?

-Sabrina Black, *SMB Style, brand design and strategy*  
<https://www.smbstyle.com>



Hi Sabrina,

Thanks for taking the time to submit your question. No matter how you phrase it (outreach, marketing, promotion, sales or networking), getting the word out and meeting new people is critical to the success of your business. It may not be your favorite part of the day, but **promoting your business requires a commitment** in order to be effective. Here are a few tips to help:

**Devote the time.** Raising awareness and building a pipeline of potential customers takes a concentrated effort. Make a commitment to **carve out meaningful time each week to focus on outreach.**

**Build a plan.** Define how you will spend this time for maximum impact and **create tangible metrics** to keep you on plan. How many emails will you send each week? Which events can you attend? How much can you budget towards SEO?

**Leverage your connections.** Your network of friends, colleagues, family and co-workers **represent your most valuable resource** since they know you, trust you and want you to be successful. Don't assume they are up to speed on your business so take the time to reach out and provide an update on your activities. Offer your expertise, products and services as a resource (what goes around, comes around) while also letting them know how they can help you.

**Network, network and network some more.** This is typically not a favorite activity but the power of networking cannot be understated. Get yourself out there and attend events, join organizations, offer to speak or mentor and talk to folks and organizations beyond your current sphere of influence. **Expand your network, build new and valuable connections to help you reach your goals.**

**Offer a simple and easy way to engage.** Everyone is busy so it can be easy for them to miss your communication. How can you break through the noise? As we've discussed in prior issues, **focus on customer benefits ("What's in it for me?") and offer a simple and easy way to engage.** Can you provide a free 30 minute brainstorming session? Free or discounted access to your product or service? Make it easy for folks to say yes!

**Be tenacious.** Committing to an outreach plan can be time consuming and sometimes frustrating. It will take time for your efforts to pay off but, trust me, they will. **Stick to your plan, follow the tips above and the results will follow!**

Good luck!

# Have a question for Craig?

Click Below For His Advice

Submit Your Questions Here

Questions can be submitted with contact information or anonymously. We respect your privacy and will never sell, rent, lease or give your information to any third party.

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E-mail Craig!



Let's talk about your plans for world domination and how I can help!

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